

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SNM-02 PA-01 PRS-01 INR-05 PM-03

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO COMDT COGARD WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2618

BURTON ISLAND

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 0264

LIMDIS

FOR THE COMMANDANT FROM AMBASSADOR SELDEN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCLR, SNAR, SOPN, NZ

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS OF NEW ZEALANDER ARRESTED FOR DRUG POSSESSION

ABOARD BURTON ISLAND

1. FOLLOWING ARTICLE HEADLINED QUOTE BOUGHT CANNABIS TO  
SELL TO US COAST GUARDS UNQUOTE WAS CARRIED PAGE TWO OF  
EVENING POST OF JANUARY 19: QUOTE: ON EVE OF THE DEPARTURE  
FROM WELLINGTON OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD VESSEL,  
BURTON ISLAND, A 19-YEAR OLD YOUTH WAS ARRESTED ON BOARD  
WITH 65 CANNABIS STICKS. MR. M. R. HOBBS, SM, WAS TOLD IN  
THE MAGISTRATE'S COURT TODAY THAT MARK DUDLEY CROSS, CAR  
CLEANER, BOUGHT THE CANNABIS IN WELLINGTON TO SELL TO TWO  
MEMBERS OF THE CREW. CROSS PLEADED GUILTY TO POSSESSING  
CANNABIS FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUPPLY ON DECEMBER 28. HE WAS  
CONVICTED AND REMANDED ON RENEWED BAIL FOR A PROBATION  
OFFICER'S REPORT, TO APPEAR FOR SENTENCE ON JANUARY 28.  
SERGEANT J.R. TUTT TOLD THE COURT THAT CROSS AND  
ANOTHER WENT ABOARD THE BURTON ISLAND AND MET MEMBERS  
OF THE CREW, ON DECEMBER 28. THE VESSEL TRAVELLED TO  
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POINT HOWARD TO REFUEL BEFORE DEPARTING FROM WELLINGTON  
WITH CROSS AND THE OTHER PERSON STILL ABOARD. POLICE  
BOARDED THE VESSEL AT POINT HOWARD AT 9:45 A.M.  
AND FOUND THE ACCUSED IN POSSESSION OF THE CANNABIS.  
IN EXPLANATION TO THE POLICE CROSS SAID THAT HE HAD  
BEEN APPROACHED BY TWO OF THE BOAT'S CREW WHO ASKED IF  
HE COULD GET THEM SOME CANNABIS. HE TOLD THE POLICE

THAT HE DECIDED TO BUY SOME CANNABIS TO SELL TO THE TWO CREW MEMBERS. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME HE HAD HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH DRUGS, MR. TUTT SAID. UNQUOTE. SIMILAR ARTICLE ALSO CARRIED IN THE DOMINION OF JANUARY 20.

2. INASMUCH AS THESE PRESS REPORTS WERE FIRST ANYONE IN EMBASSY HAD HEAR OF INCIDENT, I ASKED CAPTAIN FOURNIER AND THE NZ NATIONAL DRUG INTELLIGENCE BUREAU TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FACTS AS THEY KNEW THEM. I WAS PRIMARILY CONCERNED THAT: (A) I HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED OF THE AFFAIR PRIOR TO THE TRIAL AND RESULTING PRESS REPORTS; (B) THE APPARENTLY ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION HAS BEEN LEFT BY THE PRESS THAT U.S. CREWMEN INITIATED A POSSIBLE DRUG PURCHASE IN WELLINGTON; (C) THE SOVERIEGNTY OF U.S. SHIPS BE PROTECTED. I NOW KNOW THAT: NZ POLICE REQUESTED PERMISSION TO BOARD THE BURTON ISLAND FOR PURPOSE OF TAILING TWO PERSONS SUSPECTED OF DRUG PEDDLING; PERMISSION WAS GRANTED; ARRESTS TOOK PLACE ABOARD (OR IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING APPREHENSION ABOARD) BURTON ISLAND; THE CONVICTED MARK CROSS WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A FEMALE NAMED WILSON WHO WAS ALSO ARRESTED (CANNABIS FOUND IN HER HANDBAG); CROSS WAS APPARENTLY NOT REPEAT NO TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT BEING APPROACHED BY TWO BURTON ISLAND CREWMEN ABOUT BUYING CANNABIS.

3. THIS INCIDENT AND THE FACT THAT I WAS INFORMED ONLY LATE IN THE GAME, LEADS ME TO BELIEVE THAT REMINDER MIGHT BE IN ORDER ALERTING THE COMMANDING OFFICERS OF UNCLASSIFIED

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VISITING COAST GUARD SHIPS THAT REPORTS TO THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN SUCH INSTANCES ARE A MATTER OF FIRST PRIORITY. I CONSIDER IT IMPERATIVE THAT OUR FIRST AND SOLE SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON ANY FUTURE INCIDENTS NOT REPEAT NOT BE THE LOCAL PRESS.

4. THE BURTON ISLAND PERFORMED OUTSTANDING, EVEN HEROIC WORK DURING ITS DECEMBER PORT CALL. ITS OFFICERS AND CREW LEFT AN ENDURING IMPRESSION OF FRIENDSHIP AND GOODWILL AMONG ALL NEW ZEALANDERS. THE COMMANDING OFFICER'S COOPERATION WITH LOCAL POLICE AUTHORITIES IN THIS INCIDENT IS COMMENDABLE. WHILE THE MOMENTARY BAD PUBLICITY IS UNFORTUNATE, I DON'T CONSIDER IT TO HAVE TARNISHED IN ANY WAY THE BURTON ISLAND'S EXCELLENT RECORD OR THE CO'S FINE COMMAND. I TRUST THAT IN BRINGING THE MATTER TO YOUR ATTENTION I AM NOT REFLECTING ADVERSELY ON EITHER.  
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## Message Attributes

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